

Residential Capital Improvement Grants
FAQ log
9/14/2020 update

1.) When is the very latest to submit an application?

ANSWER: 9/21/2020 at noon.

2.) What limitations will be placed on expenses that can be considered cost sharing? For example, if the grant request is to cover costs incurred to complete a project (subsequent to the NOSA), can costs incurred prior to the NOSA be included for cost sharing purposes?

ANSWER: Allowable costs can only be incurred between the award date and the end of the same fiscal year 6/30/21. The cost sharing identification should be limited to the scope of work that you intended on proposing in the grant application. See the NOFO examples related to cost sharing to see how it impacts your cost per youth metric.

3.) How does cost sharing affect the calculation of Cost Efficiency?

ANSWER: An example was provided in the NOFO: A proposal for a \$100k project with \$25K cost sharing results in a grant application of \$75K. If the vendor served 100 clients at this site on average over the prior 12 months their cost efficiency is displayed at \$750 per client.

- Cost efficiency is based on the amount of grant funding being requested. Ensure an application clearly describes the total actual costs during the award period to describe the base (\$100K in this example).
- If you are a vendor who has a larger project which exceeds the time allowable, it is advised to describe the larger impact of the total project (If adding beds, you can add those beds into your calculation but please make sure you add a note). Ensure your application clearly delineates the costs which can be actualized and incurred during the project window and use those actualizable costs to describe the base (\$100K in this example)

4.) Are all administrative costs limited to 20%? Since our organization does not have a negotiated rate, can we still include the 10% indirect costs in addition to the 20% administrative costs? (Per cover page and pages 4–5)

ANSWER: Administrative costs and indirect costs are two separate cost categories. Administrative costs are limited to 20% of direct costs. These costs must be detailed in Section 13 of the Uniform Budget Template. If you organization does not have a negotiated indirect cost rate and you'd like to request indirect costs in addition to administrative costs, you must elect the 10% de minimis rate.

5.) We are very much in need of funds to support important security upgrades to our 100-year-old building. Our group home is the only one like it in the state that serves very young (ages 3-11), severe children who have endured extreme abuse and neglect. It has been designated as serving sex trafficking victims under FFPSA so it

is exempt from meeting the QRTP requirements, but that is not the primary population we actually serve in our program. I just wanted to double check if we are eligible to apply for these funds

ANSWER: Yes. Current residential and group home providers are eligible applicants.

- 6.) Would it be admissible to write for a replacement elevator? Right now, our youth are unable to use our elevator due to the need for full replacement. This is a lift, not a full-blown elevator. We are looking at about a \$20k expense

ANSWER: Yes. If this was the full scope of the project, it would be classified as “Maintenance Only” and subject to the -10pt penalty

- 7.) If we have two separate ideas for the same facility, one maintenance only like a roof, and one which impacts the severity of clients served, should we submit separate applications?

ANSWER: No. Vendors should submit one application per site/campus. However, each project should have costs clearly detailed and summarized. Each project will be independently assessed for possible award. If multiple projects cannot be awarded separately for any reason, it must be noted in the application.

- 8.) Regarding funding opportunity number 418 – FY21 Residential Capital Improvement Grants, section C. Eligibility Information, 1. Eligible Applicants, the RFP states: *to be eligible for a grant under this Part, a recipient must be an existing residential services provider with which the Department contracts for residential/group home services [20 ILCS 530/15]*. In section E. Application Review Information, 1. Criteria, “vendor is an existing residential/group home provider” is listed as being worth 3 points. Other examples in the application refer to applicants who have not/are not currently providing residential/group home services. Does this mean that applicants must currently be contracting with the Department, or that we must currently be *able* to contract with the Department as a residential/group home provider? i.e., Is being licensed to provide residential/group services in the State of Illinois, in addition to the other requirements (public or private not-for-profit community-based agencies, etc.) sufficient to meet this eligibility requirement?

ANSWER: An applicant must have a contract finalized by the date of award (Late October/early November). If by the date of award, a contract for residential/group home services is not finalized, the applicant is not eligible to receive an award. However, if you are a vendor who does not have a contract, but are interested in working with DCFS please contact Jeremy.Harvey@Illinois.gov

- 9.) If a facility requires building modifications/updates to comply with current Fire Marshall standards, could those required facility improvements meet the standards of this grant?

ANSWER: Yes. Note if this were the full scope of the application it would be classified as “Maintenance Only” and subject to the -10pt penalty.

- 10.) I am currently working with a local not-for-profit in analyzing their ability to submit an application to the Grant Opportunity defined above. They currently are not registered with GATA and are starting out with the ideology of obtaining a residential facility, is it possible to submit a co-application for the City of XYZ and the not-for-profit?

ANSWER: Unless the City of XYZ or the vendor being discussed is a contracted residential/Group home provider by the date of award they are not eligible as an applicant. An applicant must have a contract finalized by the date of award (Late October/early November). If by the date of award, a contract for residential/group home services is not finalized, the applicant is not eligible to receive an award. However, if you are a vendor who does not have a contract, but are interested in working with DCFS please contact Jeremy.Harvey@Illinois.gov

- 11.) Is this for in-state facilities only?

ANSWER: In-state and out-of-state vendors are both considered eligible applicants as long as the physical facility is located within the geographic boundaries of Illinois. Applications for sites outside of Illinois will not be reviewed.

- 12.) Do award dollars have to be spent in the fiscal year?

ANSWER: Award dollars must be spent on actuals that occur during the fiscal year. Please ensure that your project proposal covers activities and projects where costs can be incurred prior to 7/1/21. In addition, note that costs associated with awards cannot be incurred prior to the date of award.

13.) Will applications for projects outside of the geographic priority area be considered?

ANSWER: Yes. Geographic preference is a scored area in the Merit Based Review.

14.) Where can applicants find the GATA Uniform Grant Application and or the GATA Uniform Budget?

ANSWER: Both documents can be located on the GATA website within the [Resource Library](#). The project template is embedded within the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

15.) Page 18 of the NOFO states, "The grant term should begin no earlier than July 1, 2020. The grant term cannot exceed one fiscal year. All project expenditures must be completed within this timeframe. It is intended that projects will also be fully completed during this term." Will grantees have a full 12 months from the notice of grant award/permission to incur grant costs to complete the project, or must the projects be completed by 6/30/2021?

ANSWER: Awardees are expected to have a scope of work where actualized expenses are incurred prior to 7/1/21. A project could have a larger scope of time than the grant period allows. In this case the application should clearly state that larger scope, but the grant application should only apply to the identify portions/elements which are achievable in the given time. This impacts your project timeline, costs and expected deliverables. Projects are scored on their timeline viability in the Merit Based Review.

a. EXAMPLE: A applicant has a 2-year project constructing a new facility supporting a main campus. The vendor has already committed \$1.5M to the project and is seeking \$200k grant award. This application should clearly define the full project scope and impact. Then the application should clearly identify which elements, costs, deliverable dates are part of the scope of work in the grant application. Applicants should only include allowable costs which can be actualized within allowable timeline (Date range: Grant Award date - incurred prior to 07/01/21).

16.) How soon after completion of the capital project must organizations begin serving youth in the new facilities?

ANSWER: The preference is as soon as possible. This is largely impacted by the scope of project proposed. As an example, a new building is likely to require approval by the State Fire Marshall as is typical during licensure. This obviously impacts when the applicant can "begin serving youth".

17.) My organization provides residential services to youth with developmental disabilities. These youth may be funded through DCFS, DHS, or ISBE. Each person is placed in a home based on his/her unique diagnoses and treatment needs, not funding sources. How should the distinctions between funding sources for the same population of youth who are served in the same homes be addressed in the application?

ANSWER:

a. As to the required metrics, the instructions ask vendors to use site specific data for young adults in their program based on which location the applicant is intending on impacting. There is then no distinction between who funds the treatment.

b. This has no impact on the financial metric required. A facility has the same bed capacity regardless of the funder of treatment.

18.) Are the beds or increase severity capacity funded by these grants intended to be used for DCFS youth?

ANSWER: Yes. The legislation which enables the department to offer these grants, also states its intent is increase in capacity in "*child care institution care, group home care, independent living services, and transitional living services that are licensed and purchased by the Department on behalf of children under the age of 22 years who are served by the Department*"¹.

19.) If an application was for a group home project, do we file one application for the sprinkler system and another for other parts of a project, or one application per site?

ANSWER: The grant application should be per site/campus. If one site has multiple buildings included in the scope of work this would still be one grant application.

20.) Our FY20 audit will not be complete by the grant application deadline. Is the FY19 audit acceptable?

ANSWER: Yes

¹ https://www2.illinois.gov/dcfs/aboutus/notices/Documents/rules_363.pdf

21.)intended for emergency group homes for example and not for a 2-year TLP for older youth aging out of the system?

ANSWER: This grant opportunity is for residential and group home type treatment programs.

22.)Will there be partial awards?

ANSWER: No. DCFS intends on making awards that total up to \$800K. This will be via individual awards with an anticipated ceiling of \$200K. DCFS does not consider this a partial award, rather written intent within the NOFO to make between 4-10 awards based on high scoring requests.

23.)I am assuming grant applications must follow prevailing wage?

ANSWER: Yes.

24.)Will our proposals be strengthened by competitive quotes?

ANSWER: Yes. An application is strengthened if the applicant seeks multiple bids. Not because it is a required element. This offers an applicant a methodology to reach a competitive price and an increased scope coverable in the grant application.

25.)Are there any special requirements (e.g. State interest) if capital grant is to be used for improvements to a leased facility?

ANSWER: An applicant should describe the answer to this question in the project narrative. A clear understanding of your leasing agreement and if you are allowed to improve the facilities will be needed and noted in your application. See the project narrative template at the end of the NOFO.

26.)Are there plans for future rounds of funding?

ANSWER: Yes. However, this is dependent on the availability of funds. We encourage applications to apply in this initial offering

27.)Will the evaluation regarding average length of stay take into consideration the typical length of stay for the type of youth being served? Different populations have different expectations for length of stay.

ANSWER: Yes, members of the clinical team, operations, placement and others are part of the scoring team. These experts will be essential in the final scoring for each of these items. It is important that this is calculated as an exit cohort per site of planned expansion. This is done by taking the average length of stay across all discharges over the last 12 months.

28.)Does the department have Data on residential/group home need that it based the priority area on that it can share with current providers?

ANSWER: The priority areas were based on the experiences in seeking placement; these populations and locations were identified as often challenging to find in-state providers.

29.)Will a sealed bid process be required for contracts? This can have a significant impact on the timeline.

ANSWER: No. This grant is not using a sealed bid process. It is not required. Although, we encourage vendors to use high quality bid/vendor selection processes.

30.)If our proposal includes quotes, are we allowed to use those quotes and vendors on an awarded project?

ANSWER: Yes. Applicants should use the quoted vendors for the completion of work on a project. Changes in scope, coverable items, and pricing need to be reviewed with DCFS in advance of approval. Applicants are encouraged to ensure pricing and timeline are very close to the reality of the project.

31.)If the Department unilaterally downsized your capacity, will the State recoup the amount of funds that are not fully amortized? If the funds are properly expensed, but in subsequent fiscal years, the program closes or is reduced will DCFS recoup amounts not fully amortized?

ANSWER: No, the state will not attempt to recoup the amount of funds that are not fully amortized from an Awardee. In addition, an Awardee does not have to remove the grant award dollars from their calculation of depreciating asset considerations as they move into future years after the completion of the project.

